

SITUATION REPORT NO. 12
INCIDENT NO. 97-001
DATE: October 31, 1997 TIME: 12:00 p.m.

TO: Governor Edward T. Schafer
State Capitol
Bismarck, ND 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Flood - Devils Lake.
2. DEATH AND INJURIES: No change from previous reports.
3. DAMAGE: The level of Devils Lake at Creel Bay has risen 0.08 feet during the past month. The level on October 2 measured 1,442.48 feet compared to 1,442.56 feet on October 31.
4. RESOURCES COMMITTED:

LOCAL: No change from previous reports.

STATE: No change from previous reports.

FEDERAL: No change from previous reports.
5. VOLUNTEER ACTIONS: Staff members from Lutheran Social Services' Disaster Response Program are monitoring conditions in the Devils Lake and Spirit Lake Nation areas to see how they can assist. These efforts will be coordinated with other volunteer service providers in these areas.
6. MAJOR ACTIONS: An engineering firm hired to examine options for a Devils Lake outlet has concluded that a pipeline along the Peterson Coulee would be the most-cost effective method for an emergency outlet. Barr Engineering determined that the pipeline would minimize the adverse environmental and property owner impacts. The pipeline would extend from the west end of the lake and direct water into the Sheyenne River through and along Peterson Coulee. The project is estimated to cost \$35 million. A meeting was held on October 20 with potentially-affected property owners along the potential outlet route. An organizational meeting of the Outlet Management Advisory Committee was also held on October 20. The committee was established by the North Dakota Legislatures to assist in addressing issues related to the outlet.

A State Flood Coordination Center meeting was held in Devils Lake on October 23, 1997. Following is a summary of information reported during that meeting.

N.D. National Guard

The National Guard will discontinue dust suppression efforts on Woods-Rutten Road by October 24. Since June 14, crews had been applying a binding agent to help solidify the dust and control deterioration of the road.

A contractor has been hired to connect Camp Gilbert C. Grafton sewage lines to the Ramsey County Rural Utility System's (RCRU) services. Work on the \$236,000 project is expected to begin November 1 and end in early December.

Dike construction has been completed on the south side of Camp Grafton's main gate, located along N.D. Highway 20. The dike was installed to prevent Devils Lake floodwaters from backing into Training Area 17 (the baffle weapons firing range).

N.D. Insurance Department

Insurance Department officials are working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regarding clarification of duplication of benefits, rules and regulations relating to flood recovery throughout North Dakota.

N.D. Department of Transportation (DOT)

Favorable weather conditions during recent weeks have allowed contractors to make substantial progress on emergency highway grade raises in the Devils Lake area. Many projects have been completed, and several more are nearing completion.

Projects completed include:

N.D. Highway 20 – Grade raises at Mission Bay and Black Tiger Bay;

N.D. Highway 19 – A grade raise west of Devils Lake Airport;

N.D. Highway 57 – Grade raises near the Spirit Lake Casino entrance;

U.S. Highway 281 – Three grade raises, one south of Minnewaukan, another north of the city, and a third north of the highway's junction with N.D. Highway 19;

Work continues, weather permitting, at the following locations:

N.D. Highway 20, Narrows Crossing – The contractor is placing gravel and may add asphalt prime coat. Permanent signs and bridge guard rails will be installed within one to two weeks.

N.D. Highway 20, Camp Grafton area – Work at this site includes rip-rap installation and minor filling necessary to reach the design grade. Some gravel will be placed by winter. DOT officials doubt that weather conditions will allow the contractor to apply the asphalt prime coat for winter. The DOT is ordering signs for the location and expects to install them within two weeks. Once the signs are in place, the highway may be opened to traffic full time.

N.D. Highway 20, Acorn Ridge – The contractor is placing gravel at the grade raise and may soon add the asphalt prime coat.

N.D. Highway 57, Fort Totten – The crossing and grade raises along the north side of Sully's Hill are being filled and rip-rapped. The road will be graveled before winter. However, it is unlikely that weather conditions will allow the contractor to add the asphalt prime coat.

U.S. Highway 281 and N.D. Highway 19 – Rip-rap work has been completed north of Minnewaukan and south and east of the junction of both highways. Final fill and gravel work is underway. The contractor hopes to add the asphalt prime coat within a week. The project may be done within two weeks.

The DOT held a public hearing on October 14 to review alternatives for the flooded Narrows Crossing on N.D. Highway 57. The DOT received primarily positive comments, with participants favoring a long bridge alternative. Design work will begin in earnest if the Federal Highway Administration approves funding for the project. The bridge will measure 6,400 feet long and may cost \$15 million. The DOT Bridge Division staff is exploring less-costly design alternatives.

Based on the assumption that Devils Lake may continue to rise, the DOT has been developing plans of action for flood-vulnerable areas along U.S. Highways 2 and 281 and other Devils Lake-area highways.

Minnewaukan Flood Committee

The Minnewaukan Flood Committee has been working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE), North Dakota Emergency Management and Benson County Emergency Management on flood preparedness plans. The committee, organized in late August, has selected George Howard and Roger Huffman as co-chairs.

City of Devils Lake

Local, state and federal funding is in place for the \$50 million plan to elevate the lake level protection system for the city of Devils Lake. Financial commitments are based on plans and specifications provided by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE). For spring 1998, the city will bid for construction up to 1,452 feet and 1,454 feet at places where sand drains are located. If Devils Lake continues to rise, the levee will be raised up to 1,457 feet. City officials are acquiring land in the levee's pathway at 1,460 feet or lower.

Officials for the city of Devils Lake and Ramsey County have signed a contract for realignment of the west loop of the lake level protection system. The realignment will protect Lakewood area homes, Ramsey County Road #1, telephone, sewage and water systems and a golf course.

Work to elevate the levee to 1,450 feet will continue as long as weather permits. Construction of pumping stations will continue through winter. The city plans to competitively bid as much of the levee construction as possible next spring.

City engineering drafting employees are using the AutoCAD program to plot the economic impact of flooding. They incorporate information from aerial photos, COE elevation maps and property tax valuations to determine economic impact in three-foot contours. As example, information compiled by the employees showed a lake level elevation of 1,460 feet would cause a total of \$91 million in damages to private property. This estimate does not include highways, sewer lift stations and other public property.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE)

COE engineers hope to conclude work on flood preparedness plans for the city of Minnewaukan by December.

The COE is distributing copies of its study of flood-protection measures for Spirit Lake Nation.

Ramsey County Emergency Management

Ramsey County Emergency Management conducted a flood hazard analysis for the city of Church's Ferry. Floodwaters from Lake Irving are encroaching on the edge of the community. The lake is part of the Mauvais Coulee system that feeds Devils Lake. A meeting to discuss the problem and solutions will be held in December; participants will include representatives of the COE, Church's Ferry, Ramsey County and North Dakota Emergency Management.

Bids to reroute water and sewer lines for Ramsey County Rural Utility System (RCRU) came in over projected estimates. RCRU officials have decided to rebid the project in the spring of 1998.

Work has begun on a potential 1998 waiver of National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) requirements for residents living along the Devils Lake shore line. City and county officials have met with U.S. Rep. Earl Pomeroy and the NFIP Director to discuss a potential waiver. Up to 40 homes could be impacted if the lake rises between 1,443 to 1,448 feet MSL. During the past two years, nearly 150 homes have been moved from the pathway of floodwaters as a result of NFIP waivers.

Benson County Emergency Management

A Lakota contractor continues efforts to elevate the flooded access road to Grahams Island from 1,440 feet to 1,450 feet. The contractor has placed dirt and rip-rap on the west edge of the road and was preparing to work on the east edge. Weather permitting, gravel may be placed by the end of the construction season. Prime coat will be added next spring. The project cost totals \$2.2 million.

Devils Lake Basin Joint Water Board

The Devils Lake Basin Joint Water Board has hired a manager whose duties will include coordinating the Available Storage Acreage Program (ASAP) with the N.D. State Water Commission.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: No change from previous reports.

8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No change from previous reports
9. OTHER INFORMATION: The next State Flood Coordination Center meeting is scheduled for 1:30 p.m. on November 20, 1997, at the Ramsey County Courthouse basement meeting room. The meeting will focus on plans for potential lake level increases for Devils Lake in 1998.

Situation Reports published by the N.D. Division of Emergency Management are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is: <http://www.state.nd.us/dem>.

The North Dakota State Water Commission provides current information about Devils Lake flooding on its home page. The address is: <http://water.swc.state.nd.us>

Douglas C. Friez
State Director